

Evacuation Tips for People with Functional Needs or Disabilities

Information Links:

[UHD Evacuation Assistance Request Form](#)

[Disability.gov Guide to Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Recovery](#)

Do you need Evacuation Assistance at home?

Enroll: [State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry](#)

- ◆ If you have a temporary or permanent disability that might prevent your safe, orderly and prompt evacuation during an emergency, additional planning may be needed.
- ◆ Download, complete and submit an Emergency Evacuation Assistance Form.
- ◆ Prepare an information card regarding your capabilities, limitations and specific needs ahead of time. The card can be provided to someone that will take it to first responders.
- ◆ Identify at least two ways to exit an area and locate Areas of Rescue Assistance.
- ◆ Communication is important. If you own a cellphone, be sure to always have it charged and with you. Locate other communication devices such as telephones and call boxes. Be prepared to contact UHD Police (x8911 or dial 713-221-8911) and describe where you are located.
- ◆ Stairwells are designed to provide protection from smoke and fire. If you must wait in a stairwell for assistance, keep the doors closed.
- ◆ Establish a Buddy System with people who are familiar with your functional needs/disability. If they are unable to assist your exit, they will be able to provide valuable information to first responders.
- ◆ When an alarm sounds, proceed to the nearest exit or Area of Rescue Assistance and wait for further instructions. If an evacuation is ordered, proceed as directed with your buddy. Should your buddy or others be unable to assist you, ask them to provide information of your location and needs to first responders.



Suggestions for Faculty and Staff

- ◆ Not all people needing assistance during an emergency exhibit signs of their functional needs or disability.
- ◆ Encourage individuals who may need evacuation assistance to complete and submit an Evacuation Assistance Request form and to preplan an exit strategy.
- ◆ Always ask someone with functional needs or a disability about their capabilities, limitations and how you can help before giving assistance. If you cannot assist, offer to provide their information to rescue personnel.
- ◆ Service animals are used for many purposes. Keep service animals with the owner when possible and follow the owner's instructions. Do not pet the animal or give treats unless the owner approves.
- ◆ Attempt rescue evacuation **only** if you have had rescue training or the person is in immediate danger and cannot wait for professional assistance. If a stairwell must be used, wait for the flow of traffic to stop before entering the stairwell.
- ◆ Mobility Limited — If a person with limited mobility cannot exit, assist them to the nearest exit or Area of Rescue Assistance to wait for rescue personnel.
- ◆ Visually Impaired— Offer assistance verbally to guide them to the nearest exit. Do not grab the person's arm. Ask if the person would prefer to hold onto your arm. Be specific in your verbal instructions ("turn right" rather than "this way").
- ◆ Hearing Impaired—Get his/her attention by touch and eye contact. Use facial expressions, gestures and body language to help communicate. Offer visual instructions by pointing toward exits or evacuation maps.